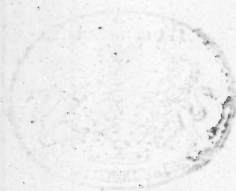


Polit. Pamphlet vol. 156

A VINDICATION
OF THE
DUKE OF BEDFORD'S ATTACK
UPON
MR. BURKE'S PENSION.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

3 March 1796



A
VINDICATION

OF THE

Duke of Bedford's Attack

UPON

MR. BURKE'S PENSION:

IN REPLY TO

A LETTER

FROM THE

RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE
TO A NOBLE LORD.

" Quid immerentes MORTUOS vexas, Canis,
" Ignayus adversum Lupos ?" HORACE.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. S. JORDAN, NO. 166, FLEET STREET.

1796.



VINDICATION,

Ec. Ec.

To David ———, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

MR. Burke has surprised us: he has again *varied his means*; and, after having hooted and hunted down the democracy, has turned round on a sudden, and opened upon the aristocracy. The people, no longer a swinish multitude, have again found favour in his sight, and he now sorrows over those *overgrown grants* and *profuse donations* from the Crown, which have enabled the peers and princes of the land to *oppress the industry of humble men*, and to *trample upon the mediocrity of laborious individuals*.

B

After

After having decorated and gilded the peerage with the spoils of the people, he seems to be endeavouring to enrich the people with the splendour and trappings of the peerage ; and the aristocracy, which he upheld and supported with one hand, he is now vexing and goading with the other. You remember, in our younger days, how surprised we were at the puppet-show man, who went behind a curtain to exhibit two puppets, the devil and the baker, between which he used to institute continual contests. You recollect too, how, with a strict attention to justice, he dealt out alternate victory to both the puppets. Mr. Burke seems, in some measure, to resemble this show-man ; and to treat the aristocracy and democracy as that man did his puppets. Aristocracy, or the devil, having been long enough victorious over democracy, or the baker, Mr. BURKE seems to think it high time that the latter should rise again, and rally, and vanquish his opponent.

Of this revolution in the sentiments and conduct of Mr. Burke, you will not be displeased

pleased with me for attempting an explanation. That explanation shall be accompanied with some remarks upon Mr. Burke's Letter to a Noble Lord. To any methodical arrangement and regular disposition of reasoning I shall not aspire. I shall avail myself "of all the privileges of epistolary effusion in their utmost latitude and laxity, and shall interrupt, dismiss, and resume my arguments at pleasure *."

After Mr. Burke retired from Parliament, a pension, not more enormous in its amount, than objectionable in the mode in which it was given and received, was granted him. This pension was charged upon the four and a half per cent. fund. Why it was so charged shall be the subject of future inquiry.

The transaction was not immediately known. Like some secret of foul and fearful import, it was at first only buzzed about, and hinted at in shrugs and whispers, and unfinished sentences :—

* Introduction to the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* of Mr. Mackintosh.

—by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know*;—or, *We could, an if we would*;—or, *If we list to speak*;—or, *There be, an if they might*;—

Or such ambiguous giving out—

The generality of men were not very willing to listen to these tales. They considered them as calumnies against him :--- they gave Mr. Burke credit for disinterestedness :---they remembered what he had said of himself, that he “ desired honours, distinctions, and *emoluments but little*, and that he expected them *not at all* * : ” —they were willing to believe that he would carefully avoid rendering his title to the proud appellation of a patriot suspected, by ranging himself in the ample battalion of those “ *obscene barpies* of pensioners, who flutter over our heads, and fouse down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unruffled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the slime of their filthy offal † . ” Poor credulous people ! always fated to believe, and always fated to be deceived ! These hints and shrugs and half

* Reflections on the French Revolution.

† Mr. Burke's Letter to a Noble Lord.

sentences at length assumed “ a combination and a form indeed ; ” and it was at last proclaimed aloud in our streets, and in our ears, that Mr. Burke had been *pensioned off*. This event was soon afterwards made the subject of legislative discussion, and the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale introduced the subject into the debate upon the question for the passing of the Bill for the better security of his Majesty’s person and government *.

Nearly

* The DUKE of BEDFORD.—“ Pensions of almost unparalleled profusion, lavished upon the *avowed advocates of economy* ; nay, upon the *very* man who distinguished himself at one time as the advocate of rigid economy, but whose conduct and whose writings have, in an eminent degree, contributed to create and continue the war, and to cause all its consequent enormous expences.”

WOODFALL’S and DEBRETT’S *Reports*.

The EARL of LAUDERDALE.—“ Was it wonderful that the people should complain ? or that they did complain ? This had well been illustrated by the noble Duke, who had spoken so eloquently in the debate. The people were insulted by seeing the most shameful negligence of their interests ; by seeing Ministers attempting to make it criminal to complain ; by seeing the most profligate waste of the public money ; by seeing the most provoking insults offered to them, in the vast sums that were lavished upon

Nearly three weeks after this incidental mention of the subject, the Earl of Lauderdale moved for some papers explanatory of the pension; and some time afterwards gave notice of a motion that should bring it regularly before the House of Lords. It was then that Mr. Burke collected his weapons, *sparsosque recolligit ignes*, arranged his artillery, and made that furious attack which has excited, and still excites, such general surprise.

This attack is personal to the Duke of Bedford.—The Earl of Lauderdale is indeed included in the declaration of hostilities; but, after a short and straggling discharge

upon courtiers and court dependents; by seeing *pensions granted daily to apostates*; a pension for instance, and a large one too, *to a man who was once the champion of economy*; but whose chief merits with Ministers were those of having attacked the principles of freedom, and of having contributed very considerably to involve us in the present war. Mr. Burke, the man he meant, (for why should he not name him?) was to have an *enormous* pension for endeavouring to inculcate doctrines that tended to extinguish the principles of freedom."

WOODFALL'S and DEBRETT'S Reports.

against

against his Lordship, and connecting and comparing him with Brissot, the Right Honourable Gentleman concentrates the whole force and fury of his fire against the Duke of Bedford. Well, then, I shall consider the attack as personal to the Duke of Bedford. And here I cannot avoid noticing, in the first instance, the rancour and malignity that seem, with respect to the Duke of Bedford, to have taken possession of Mr. Burke's mind. So wholly have those bad passions usurped it, that there is no room left for candour, for decorous treatment, I had almost said for common decency. The Duke of Bedford is first a creature; then a *leviathan* of *unwieldy bulk*, *that spouts through his spiracles torrents of brine*: he is then a *poor ox*, upon whose hide the *sans culotte carcase-butchers* are pricking their dotted lines. Really, Mr. Burke seems to suppose, that his Grace has the faculty of changing his shape as often as the Right Honourable Gentleman has changed his sentiments and principles. But the object of Mr. Burke seems to be more particularly to
hold

hold the Duke of Bedford up to public execration, as a second Duke of Orleans. He appears to wish to compare him with a man who was as debauched in his manners as he was depraved in his morals; who was destitute of every principle that was good, and generous, and noble; whose crimes were unmixed and unalloyed by any virtues, and in whom vice *lost none of its evil by retaining all its grossness.*

But to have incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans and the Duke of Bedford, of Brissot and the Earl of Lauderdale, is a circumstance which Mr. Burke considers as particularly favourable to him. They have been the means of bringing out handsome things, and commendation and applause, from a very *able, vigorous, and well-informed statesman.* This is well. You anticipate, no doubt, the name of this statesman so lavishly lauded. Mr. Fox? No.—Mr. Pitt? No.—The Marquis of Lansdowne? No.—Mr. Sheridan? No, no.—What other statesman? Ah! my dear Sir,
you

you will never guess. This able, vigorous, and well-informed statesman, is LORD GRENVILLE.—Lord Grenville?

Hic est quem petis,
Ille quem requiris.

Lord Grenville is the man whose superior intellectual attainments render Mr. Burke so invulnerable to the attacks of those inferior geniuses, the Bedfords, the Lauderdale, the Priestleys, or the Paines, of the day.

“ Why will they not let me remain in obscurity and inaction ?” I will tell Mr. Burke why they will not : Because they believe, that his late publications have had a considerable effect in inciting the nation to a war, the most disastrous and disgraceful in which this country ever had the misfortune and misery to be involved ; because they suspect, and upon strong grounds, that those publications have led to that alarm which has been used as a handle to rob us of so many of our comforts ; because they behold him belying the tenor of his former life, by accepting an enormous pension at a time when

C

the

the people are bent and bowed to the earth by the weight of such accumulated taxation ; because they see, to use his own words, “ that his operations of parsimony have been attended with the consequences of profusion ; ” because they behold a severe economist sunk, degenerated, transformed, deformed, into a supple pensioner. Mr. Burke metes out hard measure to the Duke of Bedford, and therefore cannot be surprised that hard measure is meted out to him. The cause of the Duke of Bedford is the cause of the people. If every man who dares to expose the profligate profusion of courts, is to be treated as Mr. Burke treats the Duke of Bedford, where shall the oppressed find refuge and repose ? Half the incentives to good actions are gone, when the motives of men are to be questioned and suspected at every step and at every turn.

Far be it from me to depreciate the value of Mr. Burke's *former* services ; or to detract from the merit of his *former* labours. I never can forget, and the nation never can forget, the noble manner in which he stood
up

up during the American war, in defence of those rights of man which he has since so strenuously questioned and attacked. Then, indeed, he was upon high ground; then the admiring multitude delighted to contemplate him upon his proud and well-earned eminence; then indeed he possessed the *clarum et venerabile nomen*; then, if a pension he wanted, a pension he ought to have had. But the pension was not granted *till lately*; and I believe, and the world believes, that it was NOT given for the *former* services which Mr. Burke rendered to his country, but as a compensation for the *recent* services which Ministers consider that he has done for them. You will observe, that Mr. Burke rests all his claim to compensation upon his *former* services. The manner in which the pension was granted and accepted, was, I contend, with the Duke of Bedford, a departure from Mr. Burke's idea, and the spirit of his conduct with regard to economy. I shall first attempt to show why it was a departure from Mr. Burke's system of economy. Of that system, and its operation, Mr. Burke gives the following

lowing account in his Letter to a Noble Lord :

“ His Grace is pleased to aggravate my guilt, by charging my acceptance of his Majesty's grant as a departure from my ideas, and the spirit of my conduct with regard to economy. If it be, my ideas of economy were false and ill-founded. But they are the Duke of Bedford's ideas of economy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain Bills brought in by me, on a message from the Throne in 1782, I tell him, that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or spirit of those Acts. Does he mean the Pay Office Act ? I take it for granted he does not. The Act to which he alludes is, I suppose, the Establishment Act.—I greatly doubt whether his Grace has ever read the one or the other. The first of those systems cost me, with every assistance which my then situation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the public at large, that it would

would prove impossible to reform and methodize the office of Paymaster General.— I undertook it however; and I succeeded in my undertaking. Whether the economy of our Princes have profited by that Act, I leave to those who are acquainted with the army or with the treasury, to judge.

“ An opinion full as general prevailed also, at the same time, that nothing could be done for the regulation of the Civil List Establishment: the very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitation to its services, was held absurd. I had not seen the man, who so much as suggested one economical principle, or an economical expedient, upon that subject: nothing but coarse computation, or coarser taxation, was then talked of; both of them without design, combination, or the least shadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal, or factious fury, were the whole contribution brought by the most noisy on that occasion, towards the satisfaction of the Public, or the relief of the Crown*.”

* Pages 10 and 11.

Of the Pay Office Act I do not mean to say that the pension either contradicts the letter or the spirit: but I do mean to contend, that it violates the spirit of Mr. Burke's system and regulations relative to the Civil List Establishment. In attempting to prove this assertion, I shall be under the necessity of being sufficiently prolix and dull; and of traversing a long, and tedious, and cheerless path of detail: but the necessity of the case requires it—and I must not shrink from the toil.

Mr. Burke has referred us to the authority of his most eloquent and able speech in the year 1780, on presenting his plan of economical reform. In that speech it is that he bids us seek for the rules that guided him in his plan of reform; and there it is that I have very diligently and carefully sought for them. It is impossible for any man to have been more deeply penetrated with a conviction of the necessity of economy in the expenditure of the government than Mr. Burke was at that time. He presses that necessity in every way and in every shape. The light
missive

missive weapon of wit, and the ponderous engine of argument, are both employed in attacking that profligate profusion of expenditure which pervaded the whole state. "Economy is necessary," he says, "from our own political circumstances: it is necessary from the operations of the enemy; it is necessary from the demands of the people, whose desires, when they do not militate with the stable and eternal rules of justice, ought to be as a law to a House of Commons *."—He urges the necessity of economy upon other grounds; because the country was then (1780) in a *state of war*, and was "accumulating debt to the amount of at least fourteen millions in the year;" because the people desired economy; because "it is impossible that they should not desire it; because it is impossible that a prodigality, which draws its resources from their indigence, should be pleasing to them. Little *factions of pensioners*, (alas! to reflect that this is the language of a man who is now ranged in those factions!) little factions of pensioners, and their dependants, may talk

* Burke's Speech on his Plan for economical Reform.

another language; but the voice of nature is against them, and will be heard." Of his plan he boasts that it is substantial—that it is systematic—that it strikes at the *first* cause of prodigality and corrupt influence. "What does it signify," he says, "to turn abuses out of one door, if we are to let them in at another? What does it signify to promote economy upon a measure, and to suffer it to be subverted with principle? The project, which he had formed, *extinguished*," he asserted, "*corruption almost to the possibility of its existence*, and destroyed direct and visible influence, equal to the offices of at least fifty Members of Parliament."

What was the plan of which the Right Honourable Gentleman speaks in such a high tone of rapture and panegyric? Shortly this:—To render a random expence, without plan or foresight, almost impracticable; to establish an invariable order in all the public payments; to economise the civil list establishment; to retrench much unnecessary expenditure that existed then; and to prevent unnecessary expenditure from existing in future;

ture; to regulate pensions, and to reduce the pension list to a settled and specific amount. A word or two on the success that has attended this plan of reform. Is it impracticable for a Minister to incur now a random expence without plan or foresight? We all see and feel that it is not. Has there been established an invariable order in all the public payments? No:—part of the army services are now nearly three years in arrears, and the civil list five quarters*.

Some useless expenditure was retrenched:—a third Secretaryship of State was abolished,

* And yet that mutiny in the household which Mr. Burke predicted, in case of non-payment of salaries, has not happened. “The household troops,” he said, “form an army, whose mutiny will be really dreadful to a commander in chief. A rebellion of the thirteen lords of the bedchamber would be far more terrible to a Minister, and would probably affect his power more to the quick, than a revolt of thirteen colonies. Bless me! what a clattering of white sticks and yellow sticks would be about his head! what a storm of gold keys would fly about the ears of the Minister! what a shower of Georges and thistles, and medals, and collars of S. S. would assail him on his first entrance into the antechamber after an insolvent quarter!”

Speech on Economical Reform.

as an unnecessary and extravagant establishment:—a third Secretaryship of State, however, has sprung up, much, *much* more extravagant than that which was abolished. But the part of the system of economy, which it is my business to close and grapple with, is that which relates to pensions and the pension list. That is the rub. And here, that I may not mistake or misrepresent the Right Honourable Gentleman, I shall reprint so much of his speech upon presenting his plan of economical reform as relates to the subject:—

“I now come to another subordinate treasury, I mean that of the *Paymaster of the Pensions*; for which purpose I re-enter the limits of the civil establishment. I departed from those limits in pursuit of a principle, and following the same game in its doubles, I am brought into those limits again. That treasury and that office I mean to take away, and to transfer the payment of every name, mode, and denomination of pensions, to the Exchequer. The present course of *diversifying the same object, can answer no good purpose, whatever*

whatever its use may be to purposes of another kind. There are also other lists of pensions, and I mean that they should all be hereafter paid at one and the same place. The whole of that new consolidated list I mean to reduce to £60,000 a year, which sum I intend it shall *never* exceed. I think that sum *will fully answer as a reward to all real merit*, and a provision for all real public charity that is ever like to be placed upon the list. If any merit of an extraordinary nature should emerge, before that reduction is completed, I have left it open for an address of either House of Parliament to provide for the case. To all other demands, it must be answered, with regret, but with firmness, ‘The Public is poor.’

“ I do not propose, as I told you before Christmas, to take away any pension. I know that the Public seem to call for a reduction of such of them as shall appear unmerited. As a censorial act, and punishment of an abuse, it might answer some purpose; but this can make no part of *my* plan. I mean to proceed by *bill*, and I cannot stop for such

an inquiry. I know some gentlemen will blame me. It is with great submission to better judgments, that I recommend it to consideration, that a critical retrospective examination of the pension list, upon the principle of merit, can never serve for my basis; it cannot answer, according to my plan, any effectual purpose of economy, or of future permanent reformation. The process, in any way, will be entangled and difficult, and it will be infinitely slow. There is a danger, that, if we turn our line of march, now directed towards the grand object, into this more laborious than useful detail of operations, we shall never arrive at our end.

“ The King, Sir, has been, by the constitution, appointed sole judge of the merit, for which a pension is to be given.

“ We have a right, undoubtedly, to canvass this, as we have to canvass every act of government. But there is a material difference between an office to be reformed and a pension taken away for demerit. In the former

former case, no charge is implied against the holder, in the latter his character is flurred, as well as his lawful emolument affected. The former process is against the thing, the second against the person. The pensioner, certainly, if he pleases, has a right to stand in his own defence, to plead his possession, and to bottom his title on the competency of the Crown to give him what he holds.

“Possessed, and on the defensive, as he is, he will not be obliged to prove his special merit, in order to justify the act of legal discretion, now turned into his property, according to his tenure. The very act, he will contend, is a legal presumption, and an implication of his merit. If this be so, from the natural force of all legal presumption, he would put us to the difficult proof, that he has no merit at all. But other questions would arise in the course of such an inquiry, that is, questions of the merit when weighed against the proportion of the reward; then the difficulty will be much greater.

“The

“ The difficulty will not, Sir, I am afraid, be much less, if we pass to the person really guilty, in the question of an unmerited pension—the Minister himself. I admit, that, when called to account for the execution of a trust, he might fairly be obliged to prove the affirmative, and to state the merit for which the pension is given; though, on the pensioner himself, such a process would be hard. If in this examination we proceed methodically, and so as to avoid all suspicion of partiality and prejudice, we must take the pensions in order of time, or merely alphabetically. The very first pension to which we come, in either of these ways, may appear the most grossly unmerited of any. But the Minister may very possibly show, that he knows nothing of the putting on this pension: that it was prior in time to his administration: that the Minister who laid it on, is dead:—and then we are thrown back upon the pensioner himself, and plunged into all our former difficulties. Abuses, and gross ones, I doubt not, would appear; *and to the correction of which, I would readily give my hand: but* when

when I consider, that pensions have not generally been affected by the revolutions of ministry, as I know not where such inquiries would stop, and as an absence of merit is a negative and loose thing, one might be led to derange the order of families, founded on the probable continuance of their kind of income.

“ I might hurt children. I might injure creditors. I really think it the more prudent course, not to follow the letter of the petitions. If we fix this mode of inquiry as a basis, we shall, I fear, end, as Parliament has often ended under similar circumstances. There will be great delay, much confusion, much inequality, in our proceedings: but what presses me most of all is this, that though we should strike off all the unmerited pensions, while the power of the Crown remains unlimited, the very same undeserving persons might, afterwards, return to the very same list; or, if they did not, other persons meriting as little as they do, might be put upon it to an undefinable amount.

amount. This, I think, is the pinch of the grievance.

“ For these reasons, Sir, I am obliged to wave this mode of proceeding as any part of my plan. In a plan of reformation, it would be one of my maxims, that, when I know of an establishment which may be subservient to useful purposes, *I would limit the quantity of the power that might be so abused*; for I am sure, that, in all such cases, the rewards of merit will have very narrow bounds, and that partial or corrupt favour will be infinite. This principle is not arbitrary, but the limitation of the specific quantity must be so, in some measure. I therefore state £60,000, leaving it open to the House to enlarge or contract the sum as they shall see, on examination, that the discretion I use is scanty or liberal. The whole amount of the pensions, of all denominations, which have been laid before us, amount, for a period of seven years, to considerably more than £100,000 a year. To what the other lists amount I know not:
that

that will be seen hereafter. But from those that do appear, a saving will accrue to the Public, at one time or other, of £40,000 a year; and we had better, in my opinion, let it fall in naturally, than tear it crude and unripe from the stalk."

From the above extract it appears, that it was Mr. Burke's plan to reduce the pensions to £60,000 a year; which sum he meant that they should not exceed. He considered that sum *as a sufficient fund to answer as a reward to all real merit*. He did not strike off unmerited pensions: no, that would not do; he wished to curtail the power of the Crown; to *prevent the increasing of pensions to an undefinable amount*; to *limit* the quantum of power that might be abused. He proposed £60,000 a year as the precise limitation, but left it open to the House to enlarge or contract that sum. Did the Right Honourable Gentleman, in submitting his plan to the House, say *one word about the four and a half per cent. fund*? Did he tell the House that he had left it open? Did he declare that he had

E

left

left it untouched and upon principle, because " he did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward real merit ? " No, my dear Sir, no. Where indeed would have been the benefit of regulating and retrenching the pension list, if another source was meant to be left open, by which the same effect might be produced as had been produced by an unlimited pension list ? Would not this have been a mockery and an insult to the people ? Would it not, to use Mr. Burke's own words, have been turning abuses out of one door, to let them in at another ? A pension list of £ 60,000 he considered as sufficiently adequate to reward all real merit. Out of that fund he meant all pensions to be paid. But a case arises in which a pension has been merited—the pension list is not reduced to £ 60,000 a year—What is to be done ? Mr. Burke has foreseen such a case. If any merit of an extraordinary nature shall emerge before that reduction, he says—what ? The King can grant a pension out of the *four and a half per cent.* fund, without applying to Parliament ? No, no:---he says specifically, Parliament must be applied to.

Do

Do I strain the argument, therefore, when I contend that Mr. Burke did not mean that the four and a half per cent. should be made use of in such a case? and that, if he did leave it open, and did mean it to be made use of, he destroyed the intent, and meaning, and principle, and benefit of his plan? Do I press the point too far, when I contend that the spirit of that plan was to establish the superintendence of Parliament---to prevent improvident and enormous pensions from being granted by the Crown, secretly, and without the control of the House of Commons? Finally, do I transgress the fair line of reasoning and of candour, when I assert that Mr. Burke ought not to have accepted a pension chargeable on the four and a half per cent. fund; and indeed, that, if he regarded the spirit of his system, and of his former ideas upon economy, *he* ought not to have accepted a pension that did not proceed from an address to the Throne by Parliament. I will not say any thing upon the time at which the pension was accepted, though it was a time of all others in which a severe economist would have carefully avoided any

E 2

thing

thing that could tend to increase the burdens of the people.

That systems may fail, that plans may prove inefficacious, is nothing new: but surely, you and I never expected that Mr. Burke would have been so forward in proving in his own person the inefficacy of his own plan; and that he would have furnished himself an unanswerable argument in proof of the truth of the assertion of the Duke of Bedford, that he has departed from the whole tenour of his ideas and of his conduct with regard to economy.

I have said, that I believe the pension was *not* granted to Mr. Burke for his *former* services—What were those services? Great and important they certainly were in many respects. An incidental remark or two, I must first be permitted, on the period to which Mr. Burke particularly alludes in his Letter.—It was the *portentous crisis* from 1780 to 1782. There was then “much intestine heat; there was a dreadful fermentation.” From what cause did that
heat

heat and that fermentation proceed? The Ministers had plunged the nation into an unjust and unnecessary war:—the people saw and felt the enormous expences which that war occasioned, and the obstinacy of the Government in prosecuting it. The public mind was in a ferment and fever. A wish was very widely diffused for a reform in Parliament. It was a natural wish. The people saw the House of Commons inattentive to their interests; they desired a reformation of it. What effect would have resulted from the plans that were proposed, must be mere matter of opinion—Mr. Burke thinks they would have gone to the utter destruction of the constitution. I think that it would not be difficult to prove, that the determined rejection of all reform has already injured, is now injuring, and will continue to injure the constitution. But to proceed to the services which Mr. Burke has rendered to his country, and for which Government has been so tardy in requiting him. I take the account of his services from himself. He reduced the influence of the
 Crown

Crown in Parliament—he checked, for a time, the progress of ministerial corruption—he curtailed the extravagance of the Crown. Almost, nay, I believe, all his former services consisted in opposing the measures of Ministers and the Crown. Now let me ask any one, whether his opinion of the self-denial and disinterestedness of Courts and Ministers is such, as to induce him to suppose that they would reward a man who had limited their powers and their resources?—*Credat Judæus*—I certainly cannot. My belief is, that the pension was granted to Mr. Burke for the conduct which he has adopted, and the principles which he has maintained, respecting the French Revolution—Principles which I shall always detest; and the publication of which I shall always deplore. My belief is a good deal fortified by what fell from that *able, vigorous, and well-informed* statesman Lord Grenville. After the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale had animadverted upon the pension, Lord Grenville said, that “ He should not have risen to
offer

offer a single word in answer to the Noble Earl who spoke last, had he not mentioned the case of Mr. Burke. To that he must answer, that he was proud to boast of the part he had taken in recommending the pension of that gentleman, and was ready to take his share of responsibility for it.—

He was glad to have the opportunity of avowing it; and of asserting, in that public manner, that a public reward was never more merited for the most eminent and important services. No man could boast of services to this country, and to mankind at large, more meritorious; and he was persuaded, that the Public would feel for that great character a lasting gratitude, *for having opposed the shield of reason and sound argument, to defend the wise establishments of our ancestors, in common with all the great men of former times, against the daring inroads of the most pernicious and dangerous principles and doctrines ever broached by folly, enthusiasm, and madness *.*" Here, I think, is the clue that will lead us to a discovery of the motives that induced the Government to grant

* Woodfall's and Debrett's Reports.

so enormous a pension to Mr. Burke. It is with this *shield of reason* that the Right Honourable Gentleman has won *his thousands and his tens of thousands*: it is this *sound argument* that has laid up for him *store of gold, yea of much precious gold*. I beg of you to take this with you, and never to lose sight of it through the Letter, that I never should have objected to the grant of a pension to Mr. Burke for his *former services*, antecedent to the French Revolution; that I believe, in common with the majority of the Public, that the pension was granted to him, *not* for those services, but for his conduct and his opinions respecting the French Revolution—Conduct and opinions for which, I think, he merited no pension from his country: That even if it could be proved to me, that the reward was granted solely to the Right Honourable Gentleman for his *former services*, I should still object to the manner in which the pension was granted and accepted, as derogatory to Mr. Burke's system of economy, and in direct violation of all his former principles and ideas.

After

After having concluded the defence of his claim to a pension, Mr. Burke proceeds to attack the Duke of Bedford, and the founder of his Grace's family: and here it is, that, in carrying on the attack against his Grace, the fire of his artillery reaches every other Peer and Noble of the realm. The Right Honourable Gentleman assumes it as a merit, that he was not *swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator*.—Be it so—he may fairly claim that merit: it is an honourable claim, and I very readily allow it to him. But I would fain ask, with what consistency does this sarcasm against the very essence of our aristocracy, the system of hereditary legislation, and against all our Peers, who are born *and swaddled, and dandled into legislators*; with what consistency, I ask, does this sarcasm come from a man who has characterised the nobility of the land as the Corinthian capital of polished society, as the *decus et tutamen* of our constitution? But if these *rocked and dandled* legislators are objectionable, the manner in which they have obtained their immense fortunes is equally

F objec-

objectionable. " If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion. Had the economy of selection and proportion been at all times observed, we should not now have had an overgrown Duke of Bedford, to oppress the industry of humble men, and to limit by the standard of his own conceptions the justice, the bounty, or, if he pleases, the charity of the Crown." Though the Duke of Bedford alone is pointed at in the above quotation, yet the remark is as applicable to any other *overgrown* Duke and Peer of them all, as it is to his Grace. Persevering in his attack, Mr. Burke proceeds to declare that he has done all he could " to discountenance inquiries into the fortunes of those who hold large portions of wealth *without any apparent merit* of their own. He has strained every nerve to keep the Duke of Bedford in that situation which
alone

alone makes him his superior." He is thankful that his own merits "are original and personal" (and no man perhaps has so much to be thankful for as Mr. Burke), that the Duke of Bedford's are only derivative. "It is his ancestor, the *original pensioner*, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit, which makes his Grace so very delicate and exceptionous about the merit of all other grantees of the Crown." The Right Honourable Gentleman cannot even let the harmless heralds alone, but indulges a smile at the milky kindness of their natures. Poor men! the Garters, the Norroys, and the Rouge dragons, are consigned to eternal ridicule; and, after Mr. Burke's Letter, who will be able to preserve his gravity, when he sees them *prance in a procession*? "With them, every man created a Peer, is first an *hero* ready made: they judge of every man's capacity for office, by the offices he has filled; and the more offices, the more ability. Every general officer is with them a Marlborough; every statesman a Burleigh; every judge a Murray, or a Yorke. They who alive were

laughed at or pitied by all their acquaintance, make as good a figure as the best of them in the pages of Guillim, Edmonson, or Collins." Why, what is all this but the rankest *jacobinism*? Had it been uttered by a common man a year ago, he would have been subjected to all the pains and penalties of the *star-chamber* committees that have been instituted amongst us; and Mr. Reeves and his associates would have fulminated against him their bans and their anathemas without number.

Mr. Burke now advances closer to the attack of the Duke of Bedford's ancestry. He complains of the French "unplumbing the dead for bullets to assassinate the living;" and yet he is guilty of the very same mode of conduct. He opens the "ponderous and marble jaws" of his Grace's family vault, to search for weapons to attack his Grace:—he vexes the receptacle of the dead, for evidence against the living:—he visits the sins of the father, beyond the third and fourth generation; and the misconduct of one ancestor is to vitiate the whole lineage and descent.

scent. Where is the family in the world that has not been contaminated in some of its parts and members ? If none are to be permitted to complain of corruption and crimes, but those whose blood and descent are pure, and undefiled, and unadulterated, why, as the song has it,

“ We all may as well fold our arms, and sit quiet.”

With a rapid stride Mr. Burke ascends from the present Duke, to the founder of his Grace's family. He finds no merit, in any of the intermediate members, sufficient to wash out the stain of the original stock. He passes over, totally passes over, the merits of LORD RUSSEL. The sufferings, the constancy, of that gallant gentleman, of that martyr of tyranny, make no impression upon him :—all, all are forgotten. But we, I trust and believe, never shall forget them. As long as we have life, and longer perhaps than we have liberty, we shall remember the man who perished upon the scaffold in defence of his country. Yet, if at any time his revered virtues should have escaped our recollection, they will be brought fresh and full

full to our remembrance by the inheritor of the name of Ruffel. He will employ his talents to better purposes than those of agitating and alarming the minds of his countrymen, with tales of plots that have no foundation. He will not be an advocate for draining and depopulating his country by unjust and unnecessary wars. He will not contradict his principles by his practice. He will be no economist in words, and pensioner in deeds. He will continue his career, as he has commenced it, in the cause of liberty ; and he will not be dismayed by the calumnies of venal courtiers, or the invectives of pensioned apostates.

The chief labour of Mr. Burke is to prove that he deserved *his* pension better than the founder of the Duke of Bedford's family merited the grants which he received from *Henry* the Eighth ; and then he labours to prove that founder to have been one of the vilest men that ever existed. Now really Mr. Burke is too modest—he does not do himself justice—he seems intent only on proving that he deserved *his* pension better than

than so bad a man as the founder of the Bedford family and fortunes. Out of pure tenderness, therefore, to him, I shall labour to show that the founder was not quite so bad as he has been represented to be.

The first peer of the name of Russel was a gentleman of acute parts, of much mental and personal activity, of great courage. He rose, as Mr. Burke truly says, under the patronage of Wolsey, to great wealth, and to the eminence of a potent Lord. The grants which he obtained from the Crown were of two sorts; grants from the confiscation of lay property, and grants of lands seized from the clergy. In the way in which Mr. Burke puts it, it seems as if the first Mr. Russel had enriched himself by murdering the Duke of Buckingham. No such thing: — the murder of the Duke of Buckingham was occasioned by the disgust which he had given to Cardinal Wolsey. Now if the persons whom Cardinal Wolsey protected are to be implicated in the crimes which the Cardinal himself committed, the first Mr. Russel may, in that view of the subject, be said to have been

been accessory to the murder of the Duke of Buckingham.

But what does history say upon the subject of this murder?

“ The Duke of Buckingham, constable of England, the first nobleman, both for family and fortune, in the kingdom, had imprudently given disgust to the Cardinal ; and it was not long before he found reason to repent of his indiscretion. He seems to have been a man full of levity and rash projects, and being infatuated with judicial astrology, he entertained a commerce with one Hopkins, a Carthusian friar, who encouraged him in the notion of his one day mounting the throne of England. He was descended by a female, from the Duke of Gloucester, youngest son of Edward the Third ; and though his claim to the crown was thereby very remote, he had been so unguarded as to let fall some expressions, as if he thought himself best entitled, in case the King should die without issue, to possess the royal dignity. He had not even abstained
from

from threats against the King's life, and had provided himself with arms, which he intended to employ in case a favourable opportunity should offer.

“ He was brought to a trial, and the Duke of Norfolk, whose son, the Earl of Surry, had married Buckingham's daughter, was created Lord Steward in order to preside at this solemn procedure.

“ The jury consisted of a Duke, a Marquis, seven Earls, and twelve Barons ; and they gave their verdict against Buckingham, which was soon after carried into execution. There is no reason to think the sentence unjust*.”

A grant of part of the Duke of Buckingham's confiscated estate was obtained by Mr. Ruffel. To have refused the grant of an estate, because that estate had been confiscated from a man that had been executed

* Hume's Henry VIII.—Rapin makes no mention of Mr. Ruffel having been concerned in the murder of the Duke of Buckingham.

for high treason, is a species of disinterestedness, which I can hardly think would have been practised even by Mr. Burke himself.

But this first grant to Mr. Ruffel was nothing in comparison with the second, which was a grant of property, taken, or, if Mr. Burke likes the term better, *plundered* from the Church. The plunder of the Roman Catholic church, the seizure of the lands belonging to the monasteries, excite in Mr. Burke so much indignation, that, if we did not know him to be a true Protestant, I should almost suspect him to be adverse to the reformation. You are well acquainted with the state of the national church in the time of Henry the Eighth. The habitation of the monks being established everywhere, proved so many seminaries of superstition and folly.

“ The wealth of the monastic houses brought them under great corruptions; they were generally very dissolute, and grossly ignorant; their privileges were become a public grievance; and their lives gave great scandal

scandal to the world*.” They increased the mass of unproductive labour—they oppressed the industry of man—they continued him in ignorance, and in civil and religious slavery. That Henry the Eighth suppressed these monasteries, and seized their lands from any pious motives, I do not mean to say. But be the motives what they might, I am glad he did suppress them. Their suppression has been of the utmost advantage to the country; and agriculture, and commerce, and industry, have thriven ever since. Has not the cause of religion too been benefited by that event? Ask my Lords Bishops of Oxford, Peterborough, Bristol, Gloucester, and Chester—they will answer you, I am sure, in the affirmative; for it was with part of the plunder of the national church that Henry the Eighth founded all those bishoprics. Of the rest of the plunder he made gifts to his favourites and courtiers, and I really cannot see any mighty impiety and sacrilege in accepting such gifts. Mr. Russel was one of those fortunate favourites, and many of the nobility of the present day, be-

* Burnet's History of the Reformation.

sides the Duke of Bedford, possess lands and revenues that were plundered from the same national church, and given to their ancestors by the same Henry the Eighth. Proceeding in the comparison of his own merit with that of the Duke of Bedford's ancestor, Mr. Burke claims commendation for having awakened "the sober part of the country, that they might put themselves on their guard against any one potent Lord, or any greater number of potent Lords, or any combination of great leading men of any sort, if ever they should attempt to instigate a corrupted populace to rebellion." Here is the Right Honourable Gentleman putting the country on its guard against the attempts of the aristocracy. Not long ago his merit was, that he protected the aristocracy, and put the country on its guard against the democracy.

With regard to the surrender of Boulogne, and the consequent loss of Calais, I am sure the nation has great reason to be thankful to the Duke of Bedford's ancestor for having advised and assisted in that surrender. The possession both of Boulogne and Calais had already drained, and would have continued to

to drain, the country of its blood and its treasure, without producing any one political, commercial, or naval good to us.

But why do I attempt to defend the Duke of Bedford's ancestor?—It is a needless, unprofitable task. I will give the founder Ruffel to Mr. Burke in all those black and frightful colours, in which the Right Hon. Gentleman has drawn him. Granted that he was as ambitious, as tyrannical, as corrupt, as avaricious, as he is described to be ;—was he more ambitious, more tyrannical, more corrupt, more avaricious, than the founders of all the great and noble families in the country? Have not almost all the immense fortunes in the kingdom been derived from the confiscation of lay estates, or the pillage and plunder of the church? A celebrated writer, Rousseau I think, says, “ That it is an even chance that the ancestors of a poor man may have been honest; but there are great odds that the ancestor of every nobleman was a scoundrel*.” At the worst, then, the

* Majorum primus quisquis fuit ille tuorum?

Aut pastor fuit, aut illud quod dicere nolo. JUV.

Duke

Duke of Bedford is only in the same predicament with his brother peers. The source from which he derives, may have been foul and impure; but the blood has been filtered and refined as it has flowed through the lapse of ages, and is now come out clear and sparkling and pure.

Mr. Burke, perhaps, is not aware, that what he urges against the professors of the rights of man, that "they hold immemorial possession to be no more than a long-continued, and therefore an aggravated injustice," may be urged against himself. He has been, in his Letter to a Noble Lord, doing the very same thing. Neither, perhaps, is he aware, that by attacking the mode in which the Bedford fortune was accumulated, he is encouraging, instead of discountenancing, inquiries, or *scrutins epuratoires*, into all the fortunes of all the rich men in the kingdom; he is issuing a writ of *quo warranto* against the Duke of Bedford, to make him show the manner in which he came into possession of his immense estates. Can he be surprised, if other
men

men follow the example he has set them, and investigate the origin of the enormous estates of other overgrown Dukes, Earls, and Barons, who *oppress* the *industry* of *humble men*? Will the fortunes of those peers bear the fiery ordeal? Will the Duke of Richmond, and his impost of £25,000 a year upon coals, sustain it?—Will the Duke of Portland's—— But it is an unkind and an unthankful thing to make a man answerable for the failings and crimes of his forefathers. Let us close the account.—Let us not vex the departed spirits of our forefathers by this retrospect of their crimes! We all of us have some among our ancestors whom we are ashamed of; and if Mr. Burke can boast of a genealogy without a stain or a blot, he is a luckier man than his neighbours.—Let our views be forward and perspective.—Let us do good to each other, and lay up a store of good for our posterity. This squabbling and quarrelling about our ancestors is unworthy of us.

It was not to be supposed that Mr. Burke would omit in his Letter, the subject of the
French

French revolution. That "foul fiend," that haunts his imagination, and poisons his retirement, and bids him *sleep no more*, has in this, as in all his recent publications, dipped his pen in gall. But his invectives against "the harpies of France, sprung from night and hell," do not, in this instance, assume any regular shape or substance—they are rather straggling than regular—more sharp than systematic. As an argument against innovation and change, he says that the French "complained of every thing—they *refused to reform* any thing; and they left nothing, no nothing at all, *unchanged*." He then enumerates the consequences. With deference to the opinion of Mr. Burke, the transition from complaint to change was not quite so rapid and abrupt in France as it has been stated to be. I firmly believe, that if, on the part of the monarchy and aristocracy of France, there had been evinced an *early* and *sincere* inclination to reform the monstrous grievances that existed in the government, the people would have been contented with reform, provided, as I have said before, that reform had been early. But
there

There was nothing but intrigue, and corruption, and extravagance about the Court and the Ministry, even while they were talking of reform. Oeconomy was in their mouths, but the most profligate profusion in their practice. Every thing was done to irritate, and goad, and inflame the people, and to drive them from that temper and tone in which salutary reform would have contented them. They had flattered themselves that the system pursued by Mr. Necker was so excellent, that it had relieved the finances from all embarrassment and derangement, and prevented almost the possibility of the deficit being rapidly accumulated in future. Little accustomed to deep and abstract speculations, they did not see that Mr. Necker's system of raising money by loans, without imposing taxes, was, whatever present advantages it might be attended with, calculated to throw forward a growing burthen and deficit upon his successor and upon the people. M. Necker was a good calculator, rather than a great financier; he was more fitted for the detail than for the great principles of finance; and his system seems to have been defective,

tive, both in its conception and in its construction.

This may appear to you, my dear Sir, to be foreign to the subject of discussion ; but if you will have a little patience, I shall be able to prove that it is not so.—Soon after the retreat of M. Necker, the deficit burst forth in all its horrors—it increased under the short and troubled administrations of Messrs. de Fleury and d'Ormesson, till at length it swelled to such an immoderate size under M. de Calonne, as to render some effectual and radical remedy necessary. Government had delayed reform as long and as much as possible ; they were now forced into it—what was done ?—The Notables were assembled—there were nothing but bickerings between the Ministry and that Assembly. The former wished to relieve its distresses at the expence of the privileged orders ; the latter held fast to those privileges—the Notables were dissolved. Then came the contentions between the Court and the Parliament, and the arbitrary proceedings of the former to force the latter to accede to its plans.

plans. There was indecision about the Ministers ;—they hesitated between firmness and fear—now elevating their tone to the imperious note of command, now depressing it to the humble style of supplication—nothing was reformed, and all this time the public mind was fermenting and inflaming. Whatever the Court did, it did upon compulsion—it was forced into the measure of convoking the States General.—Well ; was the conduct of the Court then more gracious or more calculated to quiet the minds of the people ? No—there were the most studied insults offered to the Tiers Etat Deputies. They seemed to be admitted to plead for the people only in *formâ pauperum*. They were vexed with flights and neglects that fret and teaze the tempers of men at all times, and which were particularly calculated to goad the minds of the people of France at that time. Then there were contests between the three orders about the form of their deliberations ; and it was obvious, that the two higher orders were determined to do every thing to reduce the real representatives of the people to insignificance. The people

now saw that there was no serious intention, on the part of the Court, to redress their wrongs ; and they took the power into their own hands. Angry and “fooled to the top of their bent,” they changed every thing, because they saw the Government backward, and unwilling to change any thing. The same effect will always be produced in all countries, where the people discover a determination, on the part of their government, not to reform their grievances. This argument of Mr. Burke’s, against innovation, affords a strong weapon to the advocates of reform in this country. Speaking in the former language of Mr. Burke, they might “most seriously put it to Administration, to consider the wisdom of a timely reform—early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power—late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy—early reformations are made in cool blood—late reformations are made under a state of inflammation. In that state of things, the people behold in Government nothing that is respectable ; they see the abuse, and they will see nothing else. They fall into the temper

temper of a furious populace, provoked at the disorder of a house of ill fame; they never attempt to correct or regulate—they go to work the shortest way—they abate the nuisance—they pull down the house. *

Of the “ harpies of France sprung from night and hell”—“ the cannibal philosophers of France—“ the Sans Culotte carcase butchers”—“ the philosophers of the shambles”—“ the savages of the revolution,” and all the other appellations which Mr. Burke bestows upon the people of France, I shall take no notice: they are mere invectives, and therefore let them pass; or if there be any wit in them, it is the wit of the shambles. But there is one fact so grossly misrepresented, that I cannot avoid bringing it to your notice. Mr. Burke says, that the Duke of Bedford “ ought to know that they (the French) have sworn assistance, the only engagement they will ever keep to all, in this country, who bear any resemblance to themselves, and who think as such, that *the whole duty of man* consists in destruction.”—Now, does not

* Speech on oeconomic reform.

Mr. Burke know, or has he forgotten, (I hope it is mere forgetfulness) that that decree, by which the French swore to assist any nation that should demand their assistance, is, to all intents and purposes, *repealed*; that it has long been the labour of the French Government to impress upon Europe the belief that it is repealed; and that, on a very memorable occasion lately, it was solemnly declared, that the French Government pretended not to interfere in the domestic governments of other nations, but wished only to ensure and establish their own liberties*. This is a point which I wish particularly to press upon your notice. As Mr. Burke had stated the evil, it would have been but fair in him to have stated that the evil had been removed.

After

* “What do I say? This hatred itself which we swear to Royalty, this hatred become part of our existence. This sentiment which we so deeply and ardently feel that we can no longer repress it—Royalty will reverse the nature of this expression of our sentiments in order still farther to load us with calumny. It will represent it as a declaration of war against all nations who do not live
under

After pointing out the temptation which the Duke of Bedford's landed possessions hold

under a Republic, and the friends of Kings will attempt to give a fresh plausibility to the absurd reproach already so often repeated, that we wish to destroy all other Governments. No.—It is not a nation friendly to equality that will attempt to infringe the rights of other nations.

“ The independence of our Government, the freedom of our navigation—such are the objects in which all our wishes and pursuits are centered. It is no longer that deplorable period, when base hypocrites, vile conspirators, secret agents of Royalty, meditating internal disturbances by their detestable intrigues, sought also, by their extravagant doctrines, to unite against us all the nations of the earth. The tyrant, it is true, was unanimously declared guilty—we here again pronounce his solemn condemnation—we swear to Royalty a hatred which can never be extinguished. *But it is enough for us to avenge the sufferings and the wrongs of the French people.* We carry in the bottom of our hearts, the deep and unalterable conviction, that for a nation there can exist no true happiness, no solid and permanent good, but from Liberty and Equality. *But every nation ought to be the artificer of its own prosperity.*”—Speech of the President of the Council of five hundred, on the 21st of January, 1795, being the anniversary of the execution of Louis XVI.—Extracted from the Courier of February 6, 1795.

out

out to an Agrarian experiment, a mode of conduct surely not the best calculated to repress any wish for trying such an experiment, Mr. Burke, without any provocation arising from the subject, makes a fierce attack upon the Abbé Sieyes. The Abbé is an object of the deepest aversion and abhorrence. Why has he selected him from the body of French Legislators? Is it because Sieyes is a man, not only of much learning, but of great disinterestedness?—He refused to be elevated to the Directorship; and at an early period of the Revolution, *he resigned his pension*; an example, in which, I fear, he will not be imitated by Mr. Burke. But so complete is the Right honourable Gentleman's detestation, a detestation not unmixed with dread, of every thing that is French, that he not only hates French politics, but also French literature and French Science. Those wonderful chymical operations of which all France partook in 1794—operations that forced admiration even from the enemies of France, extort from him nothing but a sarcasm and a sneer. The mention of chymical operations naturally connects

connects with it, in Mr. Burke's, as well as in every other person's mind, the name of Priestley—but few, I hope, will imitate him in his ungenerous treatment of that name—Now that Dr. Priestley has emigrated from this country, shame on the country that forced him to emigrate! it may not injure his personal safety to speak of him—Now that he can no longer be affected by the rage and rancour of a remorseless Church and King Mob, it may be permitted to me to pay him my humble tribute of respect. The studies which Mr. Burke has lately pursued, lead him to support sentiments and principles that inflame, and irritate, and goad mankind to warfare and to the destruction of each other. The studies which Dr. Priestley has pursued have invariably tended to preserve the health and life of man, and to promote the comfort and happiness of the human race—Dr. Priestley is dead to this country—he has sought repose and refuge from persecution in a distant climate—yet to that climate, and even across the Atlantic, Mr. Burke pursues him

him—Mr. Burke has lost a beloved son; yet I have not heard that Dr. Priestley has broken in upon *his* sorrow—Dr. Priestley has lost a beloved son too, yet *his* domestic calamity is no shield and protection to him.

From the chymical, Mr. Burke turns to the military operations of France, and there he finds as little room either for admiration or applause. The Generals of that tyrant, Louis the Fourteenth, the Boufflers, and the Luxembourghs, and the Turennes, soar high, in his opinion, above the French Generals of the present day; though, if the skill and conduct of Generals are to be judged of by their actions, the Pichegrus and the Jourdans, are at least equal to the Boufflers and the Turennes, with all their *Croix de St. Louis*, and their Marshal's staves into the bargain. But in every thing that relates to the French Revolution, it is Mr. Burke's pleasure and practice to confound and melt into one mass, parts and characters totally opposite in their natures—the Pichegrus are link-
ed

ed to the Santerres, the Rollands to the Dantons, the Reubels to the Robespierres, and the whole mass is characterized as a set of wretches and robbers, whose system and occupation it is "to pour out swarms of the lowest classes of animated nature to lay waste, like columns of locusts, the fairest parts of the world."

Of the war against these *wretches*, and *robbers*, and *locusts*—a war, according to Mr. Burke, “the most clearly just and necessary that this or any other nation ever carried on,” the Right Honourable Gentleman is a supporter to the wildest principle of enthusiasm. The author of the war he considers as entitled to a high distinction—a distinction which from pride he might arrogate to himself, but which from justice he dare not—Yet, though the whole merit of originating the war with *Regicide* is not his (I am perfectly ready, however, to allow the Right Honourable a very considerable share of that *merit*)—he assures us, that we shall never, “with the smallest colour of reason, accuse him

him of being the author of a peace with *Regicide*.”—Regicide! Regicide!

And in his ear I'll holla, Mortimer;
Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but Mortimer——

Do you know that I am inclined to believe there is more meant in this than immediately meets the eye—the war, Mr. Burke fees, is growing unpopular—we are tired of such a dreadful waste of blood and treasure—we fight for peace—it is necessary to give a fillip to our lagging ardour—we are shortly to have Mr. Burke's *Thoughts on the Prospect of a Regicide Peace*—the warhoop against Regicides is to be sounded through Europe again—a second Peter is “to rouse the martial nations of Europe,” to pursue the crusade with redoubled vigour.—If that is to be the case, I shall hope that “Europe will not be obedient to the Call of the Hermit.” The Allies and the French have, indeed they have, shed “blood enough.” In God's name, let there be a stop to it—let there be a truce to
the

the miseries of mankind—then we may hope to be happy—then we may expect that the irritation that now divides us, will subside into harmony and confidence—then we shall look at each other, no longer with the scowl of suspicion, or the frown of anger, but with the cheering regard of sincerity, and the heart consoling smile of brotherly affection.

I think I have now, my dear Sir, completed my original intention. I have made such remarks as the perusal of Mr. Burke's Letter suggested to me.—Shall I candidly confess to you, that your refusal to acknowledge the justice of them will neither surprize nor hurt me?—It is difficult, and frequently impossible, to recover from the rapture and delirium into which Mr. Burke's works always throw us. The wizzard has such potent charms about him, that I could almost wish to remain for ever spell-bound by him. The vigour and eloquence of his periods enchant me—I admire, though I cannot approve, the energy of his invective—I cry out, *Quando ullum*

(66)

ullum inveniam parem * ? And I am ready to acknowledge with you that, since Cicero, there has been no such man.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

THOMAS GEORGE STREET.

* The line is somewhat altered from Horace—*Quando ullum inveniet parem* ?

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE peculiar and invidious contents of Mr. Burke's Letter have led many persons to enquire into the state of his own finances for many years, and into the conduct both of himself and other persons related to him, in pecuniary matters. Mr. B. cannot have forgotten the obscure hint which Johnson once dropped, and which Mr. Boswell, with his usual accuracy committed to paper, though with *delicacy* quite unusual, he has forborne to communicate that hint to the Public in his Biographical Memoirs of our great Lexicographer. But the circumstances will, in all probability, be examined with the utmost strictness, and supported by clearest proofs; and should these proofs come, as they perhaps will, within my reach, I shall, without hesitation or apology, give a *detailed* account of certain Irish transactions, in a new and enlarged edition of this pamphlet. To Mr. Burke I must speak in the language of Terence, *Si pergit, quæ volt, dicere; ea quæ non volt, audiet.*

THOMAS GEORGE STREET.

March 3, 1796.

